



043

**Newsletter of the
Underground
Music Scene of
Batangas**

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INTRODUCTION TO HUMANITY? by xA.J.x™

What's up? I was supposed to do this stuff about 5 or 6 months ago but since yours truly is a classic "ningas-cogon" kind of guy, I stopped even before I finished this article. And furthermore, during those months, a lot of stuff happened in my personal life that my disposition was lower than the Marianas Trench (check out your Geography 101 if you don't know that). So to make the long story short, I never got around to finishing this newsletter. So even though I'm very busy now (w/ my studies, love life, etc.), I decided that I should finish it now because if I don't, there won't be a next time. Life is so short after all. Actually, I got the kick from my mom, who always nagged me to finish whatever I have started (she's a femiNazi leader, so she's sort of a dictator, hehehe). So what the fuck is this shit? Well, this shit happens to be a brainchild of a bunch of losers who just want to report something about the scene here in Batangas. But first, I would like to tell you how young the scene here is. Many kids here don't know what hardcore is. Punk is more recognizable because of those bands that play pop punk, which we usually hear in our local rock station. But the kids think that hardcore is all about fashion, heavy riffs and all that shouting and screaming of senseless shit that they all seem to like. Their idea of a hardcore band are the likes of *Limp Bizkit*, *Korn*, *Linkin Park* or worse, the likes of *Cheese*, *Slapshock*, *Greyhoundz* etc. These bands are not hardcore. They're just bands that play heavy music, or new metal as the so-called "critics" like to call it. But I won't stop them if they like to play it that way. They're after the money and fame after all. Ok, we're straying from our topic. The scene here is so small that only a few people know that there are punk/hardcore bands here. But in fairness to the Batangueños, some did come to the gigs here out of curiosity or whatever cause they want. At least they had the chance to understand and be educated.

And as I've said, during that long period, a lot of things have happened. We had our first (ever) underground music gig here. It was last March 24 and another one last July 14 (both happened in Lipa city). Both were successful, at least in my opinion. Another is being planned, but with no exact date yet. Anyway, my real mission is to give you the existing bands here in the Batangas underground music scene. There are a lot of new faces and still some old ones here. First of all, the last line up of sXe metalcore band, *xOne Against Allx*, have called it quits. Their drummer had already gone to the States and also, there were some differences among its members. I won't dig that up much further because it's too sensitive a subject. Its members are still active in the scene though (but with different bands). Another band that officially broke-up is the punk/ska group *the Cutes*. The remaining members have formed a new band in the form of *One Sweet Day*. They play melodic pop punk. Watch out for more of them. The punk rock outfit *Settled Down*, led by former *OxAxAx* axeman xThugz, is still here, although their drummer (also *xAxAx*) has already left. Now with a new line-up (a change of instruments and a new member), they are out to prove that this band is Batangas' premiere punk rawk band. Another xThugz-led group is the *Ala Ehi Mob*, which is composed of members from different bands from the Bauan area. They play in your face, old school, and gang style hardcore/punk. It also includes some old faces from the punk/hc scene. There are two new bands that sprung up last summer. *FatBurners* is one of them. They play melodic emo-punk. They made their debut in the last gig here. Very impressive, if you ask me, since they had a very short time to practice. This band has a lot of things to show.

Another new band is *20 Minutes of Existence*, noise/grindcore that'll blast your sensibilities to smithereens with explosive and straightforward noise. This band is also composed of people from different bands (most of it members of *One Sweet Day*). *Forgiveness Denied* remains to be one of the pillars of the Batangas scene. Led by former *OxAxAx* members, Felix and xJewirox, playing new school hardcore, powered by dual vocals and aggressive riffs. Although most of them are straightedge, they say that they are not a sXe band. Their lyrics tackle social, personal, moral and sometimes political issues. They are currently the most active among the bands here since they seem to perform almost everywhere. Another great band is new school hc specialist *Strength From Within*, which hails from Lipa City. Along with some members of *Forgiveness Denied*, *One Sweet Day*, and *Survival of the Fittest*, they form the *Alliance Crew*, which was responsible for the first 2 gigs here. Of all the bands here, *Survival of the Fittest* proves to be the fittest since they have not changed or removed its members for almost two years now. This band had split-up, regrouped, then broke-up again, then reformed later. They really live up to their name. They play ghetto-core, a mixture of ghetto rapping and hc/metal riffs and beats. And now with the addition of a second guitarist, they make their music heavier than before. This band is one of the oldest here in the Batangas scene.

So there, that's all of the bands that I know for now. Please continue supporting them. They are all great bands, as opposed to some bands here that play alternative music or worse variety, which most people here prefer. The majority here love show bands, boy bands, girl groups, and/or solo artists that don't even make their own music. As I have mentioned earlier, the scene here is young compared to the other scenes. We should help each other instead of squabbling so that we could have something we could be proud of. And before I go, I have one thing to say to all the people who are fighting each other in the scene, learn to respect. It doesn't matter what you are or what you stand for. Just learn to respect others opinions even though it's very much different from yours (kahit straightedge ka o hippie, sober o mag-linom, vegan/vegetarian o mangangame, bastos o maginoo, magpa-punk o magha-hardcore, atheist o YFC, communist o capitalist, simple o mag-japorms, pangit o cute, coño o ghetto, fat o thin, nerd/geek o hunk, jerk o mabait, maingay o tahimik, bobo o matalino, bakla o masochista, tomboy o hot chick, magre-reggae o magde-death metal, crust o emo and everything in between). You don't know how hard it is to be in the middle. I consider you all as family and it hurts to see us divided. There are many things I could say, but for now, all I ask you is to respect each other's views, opinion, philosophy, etc. It may not end the feud, but it's a start. Love and peace y'all! This issue also includes interviews with *Forgiveness Denied* and *Settled Down*. So sit back, relax and enjoy.

xA.J.x™ was a former member of *the Cutes* and *OxAxAx*. He is now busy with his old band *Survival of the Fittest* and his new punk band *Happy Pandemonium*. He's an old freshman in the Batangas State University.

INTERVIEWS (we write what you say)

Forgiveness Denied

I recently caught up with Felix, front man of this new school hc group. We talked about the history of the band, decisions and

choices, the formation of Alliance Crew, and some very delicate issues in the scene here in Batangas.

043: would you give us a short history of your band?

Felbox: the band was formed in late January 2001. **Forgiveness Denied** is composed of ex-members of hardcore bands, xOne Against Allx and Before Dishonor. The band is me in vocals, xJervinx in guitars (both are OxAxAx graduates, -ed), Edrick (also plays guitars for FatBurner) on drums, xJohnx also on vocals (ex-members of Before Dishonor), Niboxon (drummer of F.B.) on guitars and xRenx on bass.

043: what is the philosophy of the band?

Felbox: we don't consider ourselves as a straightedge band, but most of our members lead that path. Individually, we have different beliefs so our philosophy, as a band, is to find the true reality in this life.

043: are you pro-choice?

F: I consider myself as pro-choice because each individual has a right to do whatever they want with their life. But as I said earlier, our beliefs may vary as individuals. That was only my opinion.

0: what about those who do drugs, smoke or drink?

F: it's their decision. A lot of my friends do that stuff but I still treasure them. It doesn't mean that just because I'm a sXe, I have to impose this personal view to others. It's their choice. But if everybody could escape these vices, addiction, and substances, it would be better.

0: what's the story behind the Alliance Crew?

F: it was formed by Strength from Within and our band. It was formed so that we could recognize ourselves, share and help each other with our problems. The goal of this crew is to unite different people whose beliefs are diverse but with one goal that is hardcore.

0: many people here in the scene think you (and maybe the whole band as well) as highly opinionated. What is your reaction to that?

F: at first it was an issue for us but it's only words. If they think that we are highly opinionated, we are open-minded people. If you want change, we're beginning it in this underground scene. If these people think that they are being stepped on, well I guess you have to organize your own gig and don't invite us. You want so much change but all of it is just words and we people who try to put it into action are labeled as highly opinionated. Why is it like that? I think it's so counter revolutionary.

0: any gigs or demos out yet?

F: as a band we are still young and we've just appeared in a few gigs, mostly in our area. No gigs for now. Demos? At first we planned to record a cassette demo, but because our schedules are different, we opted to release a 6-song CD EP maybe on the end of September. I hope you will support it.

0: where could we contact you for gigs and stuff?

F: Felbox- (043)980-7934, Niboxon- (043)980-6169, xJohnx- (043)402-3400 or you could send your hate mail to XfurrX@hotmail.com or duomaxocwell@trustkill.com.

0: anymore words of wisdom?

F: "with freedom comes a responsibility for our action. It is our duty." This is taken from our song "The Cost of living" (which will be included in the CD EP). Stay focused. Not everything that you see and hear is reality.

0: shout outs?

F: to my interviewer, my friend from way back, xA.J.x, congrats to your first issue of this newsletter. To all the bands in the 043 scene, especially Survival of the fittest, Strength from within, FatBurners, 20 minutes of existence and One sweet day. To my girlfriend, Sarah, for being my emotional inspiration. To my family, to Alliance crew, all sXe, vegans/veggies and to all those who seek the true meaning in this so called life. Also this, to the people who have been dissin' us for no apparent reason but to fulfill their so-called "self-righteous" goals, we thank you. Your "kind" words strengthen us to excel more and be active. You've been creating this division of our scene for what? Why?

Settled Down

Here is an interview with Settled Down vocalist/guitarist, xThugzx. We talked about the bands new line-up, about ex OxAxAx and Settled Down drummer xD.J.x, their new songs, about the scene and tons of issues. This what he had to say.

043: when did the band form and who was included in the original line-up?

xThugzx: before anything else, hello out there, hardcore punk land. Ok, let's start. The band started in mid 2000. The original line-up

included Carlo (of One Sweet Day) in guitars, Momen (also of One Sweet Day) in bass (both are former members of OxAxAx), xD.J.x in drums and me in guitars and vocals. It lasted for 9 months.

0: how about the current line-up? What is the difference of the original to the current line-up? Did the music change or what?

xT: xD.J.x is in the States with his mother, so we had a few technical problems that's why we decided to lay low first. A few months later, Carlo and I decided to form again, sayang eh! Carlo replaced xD.J.x in banging the drums. He was angry at first because he wanted to play the guitar, but everything is ok now. And we got a new member of the family of Settled Down, a sXe guitarist, xJefix (formerly of Before Dishonor).

0: by the way, how is xD.J.x? Where is he now?

xT: the last time I saw him was when I had my last tattoo. He's in Norfolk, Virginia. He applied in PETA but he was not accepted. He was supposed to work in a meat shop but since his sXe values got the better of him, he declined the offer. He now works in a bookstore.

0: let's talk about the scene?

xT: here in Batangas?

0: no, in our local scene.

xT: it's hard for us to answer this one we're fresh and new in the scene. The problem is that there are a lot of critics that disrespect the beliefs and convictions of others. This must be stopped. **THE ANSWER IS UNITY!!!**

0: how about the scene here in Batangas?

xT: there's a lot of Slapshock stuff but I don't care what they are doing as long as they believe in what they do. I'm not criticizing people or bands like them, gusto nila yun eh, among magagawa ko? But there's a lot of hardcore/punk kids in the scene now. I heard that there are many bands that play emotional stuff, marami yatang in-love eh. There are a lot of good musicians here, but the problem is lack of conviction for what they do or did. "Be strong to your conviction, be strong to your decisions."

0: do you have original songs now?

xT: yup! We have 5 new songs. Our first song is "Acceptance", which is about a girl that wouldn't accept the truth, accept me for what I am. Next is "Null Feelings", about a girl with no feelings at all, a girl who is insensitive. Next is "YTO" which stands for you're the one, which is obviously about someone I still love, this one also says sorry. Another song is "Waiting" which is obviously about waiting for a girl. The last song is for my bestfriend and your bestfriend, xD.J.x, "Till the end of time". I'll share with you my favorite line from that song, "I call you but you said you're busy, I still remember you're leaving but you never told me." (nakakaiyak naman.-ed)

0: what motivates you to play this kind of music?

xT: bands like Face to Face and the Descendents, of course.

0: what's the band doing now?

xT: we are focusing on our original songs and skateboarding.

0: how many gigs have you played in?

xT: nahh! For now, we're busy with our original songs that's why we're not playing in gigs yet, because you know in the scene, there's a lot of critics that's why we need a lot of practice so the kids will love us and not criticize us.

0: so where could we contact you for gigs and stuff?

xT: you could call me at (043)727-3450. look for Raymond or Tagne (those are his other names.-ed). You could write to #17 San Agustin st., Bauan, Batangas, Philippines 4201. You could e-mail me in xTHUGZX@eudoramail.com. Or you could call Carlo at (043)723-4940.

0: shout-outs?

xT: thenxxx for the inspiration, to the local and worldwide "undahground" scene, to kuya Rod, to you, xA.J.x, to Ala Eh! Mob band here in Batangas, xFeudx, Fritz-technical, Butch, Chris, PETA and ALF, to all sXe vegan/vegetarians out there, to everyone supporting the underground scene and to xD.J.x out there, padala ka naman ng stuff. More power!

PAHABOL:

For comments, opinions and contributions call me at (043)402-3510 and look for A.J. I would like to thank Ega of Bathun Conspiracy, Kenneth Azucena, the whole crew, for the support since day 1 and the people behind this, for the blood sweat and tears. Thank you to Lee Bogs™ for the pa-print. And also, to those who had no faith in us, we thank you too, you were our motivation. xA.J.x™ address: Baraba West, Batangas city, Batangas, Philippines 7200